

501(c)(3) Advocacy Organization: Update
Iowa Council on Homelessness
May 15, 2015



As of last month, “Home Forward Iowa” is registered with the Iowa Secretary of State as a Corporation – working on Securing the 501 C (3) status. An application to the IRS for 501(c)(3) status is being finalized for submission this month. The business address is located in Des Moines. Below are some excerpts from legal incorporation documents:

MISSION: To provide solutions to homelessness through supportive funding programs, expanding community collaboration, capacity-building, education, and advocacy.

PURPOSE:

- 1) To provide advocacy and education
- 2) To build capacity of service providers and assist local communities and service regions in responding to homelessness
- 3) To actively promote community-level solutions that result in a variety of housing solutions for Iowans experiencing homelessness

The Corporation shall accomplish these goals by: (1) securing funding from both private and public resources and (2) coordinating personal services and donated goods from the private sector. Securing and expending such resources shall be done in coordination with the Iowa Council on Homelessness and the Iowa Finance Authority to ensure that leveraging of resources is optimized and duplication of resources is minimized. Moreover, in recognition of the central role of community investment in achieving solutions to homelessness, the Corporation shall endeavor to provide transparency and accountability to the public in general and investors in particular regarding the acquisition, use, distribution of funds and positive outcomes as reported by service providers.

Initial Directors listed on papers filed are David Binner, Stefanie Munsterman-Robinson and Tim Wilson. Members of the ICH are encouraged to nominate individuals from these categories for consideration of appointment to the HFI Board of Directors:

- Iowa Homelessness Council members
- Iowa-based corporations
- Faith-based community
- Iowa-based small businesses (especially manufacturers)
- Those Iowans who have experienced homelessness

Funds have not been received at this time, though several solicitations have been made and are being considered. Arrangements are being negotiated with the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation to receive donations so that such would be tax-deductible. In keeping with the spirit of the language above, solicitation will be from sources that expand the base of support for addressing homelessness; i.e., not from sources that are currently funding shelters and providers of homeless services.

Possible activities:

- Advocacy at state and local levels for policies promoting the creation of and access to safe, affordable housing
- Advocacy at state and local levels for increased public and private resources directed at addressing homelessness
- Linking Iowa at a statewide level to national initiatives and organizations addressing homelessness
- Capacity-building for agencies seeking to achieve state shelter program standards
- Community capacity-building for Point-in-Time participation
- Supporting efforts to establish a statewide coordinated assessment system
- Facilitate sharing of best practices in areas where no shelters exist
- Strategic collaboration with advocacy organizations addressing hunger, domestic violence, and other issues often related to homelessness
- Engagement with business community in creating more employment opportunities for Iowans experiencing homelessness
- Working with faith-based communities to find creative solutions to homelessness at the local level
- Creative solutions for those homeless households experiencing mental illness as this is a leading cause of homelessness

